

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment and Response to Office Action in response to the Office Action mailed June 22, 2006.

Claims 1-4, 6-35, 65, 67, 69, and 71-117 are currently pending in this application, claims 5, 36-64, 66, 68, and 70 having been cancelled in the foregoing amendment and new claims 85-117 having been added in the foregoing amendment.

Claim 24 stands objected to because of an informality. Claims 1-3, 9-14, 16-19, and 23-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,936,248 to Miller (hereinafter "Miller"). Claims 65, 67, and 82 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,109,087 to Talbert (hereinafter "Talbert"). Claims 4, 20-22, 34, and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller. Claims 15, 65-69, and 75-84 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,463,938 to Sarukawa (hereinafter "Sarukawa"). Claims 83 and 84 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Talbert.

Please cancel claims 5, 36-64, 66, 68, and 70 without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter therein. Please add new claims 85-117. Support for these new claims can be found in the claims as originally filed as well as other locations throughout the specification and drawings.

Claims 5-8, 27-33, and 70-74 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As described in more detail below,

Applicants have amended the claims to incorporate the allowable subject matter and also added new claims which also incorporate the allowable subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Election/Restrictions

In order to facilitate allowance of this application, Applicants have cancelled the non-elected claims (claims 35-64) without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter therein.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 24 due to an informality. Applicants have amended claim 24 to correct the formality error and respectfully submit that this objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-3, 9-14, 16-19, and 23-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Miller. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 65, 67, and 82 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Talbert. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 4, 20-22, 34, and 35 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of

claims 15, 65-69, and 75-84 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller in view of Sarukawa. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 83 and 84 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Talbert.

Applicants respectfully submit that each of these rejections are now moot in view of Applicants' amendment to the claims. Each of the pending claims now incorporate subject matter that the Examiner indicated was allowable.

Specifically, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include each of the limitations of dependent claim 5, which the Examiner indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance. As claims 2-4, 6-35, 65, 67, 69, and 71-84 depend from claim 1 or an intervening dependent claim, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Applicants have added new independent claim 85. New claim 85 represents previously allowable dependent claim 8 rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of prior claims 1 and 8. As the Examiner indicated that prior dependent claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 85 is in condition for allowance. As claims 86-95 depend from claim 85 or an intervening dependent claim, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Applicants have added new independent claim 96. New claim 96 represents previously allowable dependent claim 27 rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of prior claims 1 and 27. As the Examiner indicated that prior dependent claim


27 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 96 is in condition for allowance. As claims 97-104 depend from claim 96 or an intervening dependent claim, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Applicants have added new independent claim 105. New claim 105 represents previously allowable dependent claim 29 rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of prior claims 1 and 29. As the Examiner indicated that prior dependent claim 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 105 is in condition for allowance. As claims 106-117 depend from claim 105 or an intervening dependent claim, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the claims remaining in the application is in condition for immediate allowance. The Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at (336) 607-7443 to discuss any matters relating to the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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